

These figures are especially interesting at this time, showing, as they do, the rapid increase in the numbers that are being turned into our ranks each year. In 1905 we may expect to see a record of five thousand new members added to the nursing profession.

Naturally the question arises, How well equipped are these women for the sacred duties of the sickroom? How many of the five hundred and fifty-two training-schools possess the facilities and experience for the thorough practical and theoretical education of their pupils?

The movement for the State registration of nurses and training-schools has commenced none too soon; it must be urged forward steadily by a strong effort, all nurses and all States uniting.

That such registration will become universal is as sure as that it has already commenced in five States. The difficulty is to hold the interest of the great rank and file during the long, tedious process of securing legal enactments, and in teaching them that even after laws are passed results must come slowly.

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### SOME UNPLEASANT TRUTHS

IN Samuel Hopkins Adams's article in the January *McClure*, entitled "Tuberculosis: The Real Race Suicide," there has been a laying bare of unpleasant truths such as we have not had in a great while. Mr. Adams shows that in many cities church associations, philanthropists, and people of note are the owners of many of the tenement houses where human beings die constantly because of the horribly unhygienic conditions of the buildings. He shows, further, that while on the one hand the great war for the extermination of tuberculosis is being led by one set of medical men, it is being defeated by the active political opposition of another set of medical men who are in many cities strong enough in numbers and influence to control the situation. The prime movers and the chief obstructors are members of one and the same profession.

The *National Hospital Record*, commenting editorially on the question of State registration for nurses, speaks harshly of those members of the nursing profession who are the obstructors in nursing reforms. The comment reads:

"And a man's foes shall be of his own household." The Great Teacher never gave expression to a truth more profound. If anyone needs an illustration of this truth he will find it strikingly exemplified in the ranks of doctors and nurses. The greatest enemies the medical profession has are doctors. The greatest enemies nurses have are nurses. The great stumbling-block to nursing legislation to-day is division in

the ranks. This division can in a good many instances be traced to the habit of harsh, unkindly, open criticism of the rank and file on the part of some who pose as leaders in the campaign of legislation. A few nurses with unbridled tongues, and a zeal that is not according to knowledge, can effectually kill any enthusiasm that may have been created in favor of nursing legislation. Given graduates of a dozen different schools in a small or moderate-sized city, with a few of these critical, untactful, and aggressive spirits trying to take the lead, and it is next to impossible to get nurses to agree on anything. It is next to impossible to get enough of them together to constitute a quorum to do business. It certainly is not conducive to enthusiasm to use precious time at a called meeting in mere gossip about what this nurse, that nurse, and the other one did or did not do or say, and busy, sensible, practical people will not waste time in attending more than one or two such meetings. The nurses are few and far between who do not desire nursing legislation, but unless some nurses die or get married, legislation is a long way off in some States of the Union."

Nurses know only too well the type of men referred to by Mr. Adams and the editor of the *Record*. They are the mercenary, unethical politicians who in every community for years have been a drag upon the upward movement in medicine by putting forward their own selfish and commercial schemes instead of working for the public welfare and the broader development of the medical profession.

This same class of men are also the stumbling-blocks in nursing progress. They are the financial proprietors of all kinds of questionable nursing schools. Of a little higher grade, they nag and interfere with the training of nurses in the hospitals with which they are connected, and no detail of domestic management of the training-school is too petty for their consideration. Being usually of the type that has failed to achieve reputation in medicine, this class satisfy their craving for homage and leadership by posing as benefactors, and through the influence of the cap and apron of the nurse they obtain a weak kind of notoriety.

It is from an entirely different type of men that nursing has received cordial and helpful coöperation from the very first. Men of the manly and vigorous type, successful in their own profession, ready to aid by teaching and advising, but always encouraging nurses to work out their own salvation independently, and in the great movement of State registration giving organized and individual support to the efforts of the nurses; and for these men nurses feel the deepest respect and gratitude. These men are the leaders in all public reforms, and they are the advance-guard in medical education and medical progress.

But there is equal truth in what the *Record* says about division in

the ranks among nurses; the kind of intolerance referred to is to be found, we fear, in greater or less degree in every nursing organization, and it tends to kill the efforts of those naturally timid, who, but for the sharp tongues of some of their associates, would do telling work in the interest of the great upward movement.

While the *Record's* condemnation is most distasteful and humiliating, we have to admit that it is just.

Fortunately, there are enough women with courage to ignore criticism to keep nursing progress, like medical progress, advancing. Those who really achieve anything must do it in the face of opposition. Chronic objectors are found in all walks of life and in every community.

It is comparatively easy, and requires no special ability, to tear down; it is exceedingly difficult, and requires both strength and knowledge, to construct.

We once heard a public man say, "Show me a person who has never been criticised, and I will show you a nobody," and it is a truth that nurses will do well to consider.

These stumbling-blocks in the nursing ranks are not the workers; they are frequently women of education, but have education without character. They cannot get away from the narrow, personal point of view to take a broad, unselfish outlook on any subject. They belong to the class known as chronic objectors, and they are bringing opprobrium upon the entire nursing body.

There should be some method of discipline devised for their reformation, that before it is too late the nursing profession may avoid the errors of the great medical body and profit by criticism such as we have cited. Things that are wrong must be resisted in the face of opposition and criticism.

It has become the acknowledged right of the medical profession to control the standards of education in the medical colleges. It is the acknowledged business of the clergy to safeguard the affairs of the Church; it is clearly within the province of the great nursing body to so control the education of nurses that women of moral and professional fitness only shall join their ranks and be privileged to go into the homes of the people in time of sickness.

This work has commenced; nurses are upbuilding themselves; the movement is world-wide; it may be hindered and obstructed, but it cannot be stopped.

Until the entire burden of the education of nurses rests upon the shoulders of nurses there can be but small improvement in the existing chaotic conditions.

Welcome all honest coöperation from every source, but resist leader-

ship and dictation of every kind that is outside of the great nursing body. Remember that the leaders are only as strong as their backers, and let us not lose time by petty differences.

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### AN INTERESTING SITUATION IN MASSACHUSETTS

IN no State where registration is under consideration are the problems so difficult of solution and almost ludicrous as in Massachusetts. During the month developments have been interesting. We explained in the January number something of Dr. Alfred Worcester's position in regard to State registration.

In the August, 1902, issue of the JOURNAL we published an address delivered by Dr. Alfred Worcester to the nurses of the Long Island Hospital of Boston, entitled "Is Nursing Really a Profession?"

One gathers the impression from this paper that Dr. Worcester is cordially in favor of nurses managing their own affairs. On page 911 we find the following:

"In recognition of the invaluable assistance given by the sister profession, the busiest physicians and surgeons give unsparing every possible aid in the instruction of student nurses. It is true they look forward with hopeful anticipation to the time when they shall be relieved of much of this work by nurses who, having mastered both the science and the art of nursing, shall undertake all the teaching of their successors.

"This thought leads me to point out that one of the obstacles to the recognition of nursing as a profession is this temporary dependence upon the medical profession for teaching in schools for nurses. But already it is plain that only the comparatively unimportant science can be taught by physicians, and that the art of nursing can be taught only by nurses. And now that highly educated women are entering the profession, we shall surely soon have nurses who are at least equally able to teach the science upon which the art of nursing depends.

"So much for the teaching test.

"Another closely allied characteristic of a true profession is the sharing with all associates every professional advantage. The lawyer, the clergyman, and the physician delight in giving brotherly help to their fellows. They have associations and meetings for sharing their discoveries and regulating their professions.

"Can modern nurses stand this professional test? I wish I could answer more positively in the affirmative. There are many hopeful signs. Associations of nurses are forming, nursing journals are at last under the control of nurses, books upon nursing by nurses are increasing, more interest is being shown by nurses in the regulation of their profession. But it must be admitted that progress in this direction has been provokingly slow. The modern nurses too often have followed their predecessors in unprofessional ways. They have not helped each other;